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March/April 2007

Practice Makes Perfect Water Utility Hosts Emergency Response Tabletop Exercise

On March 13, supervisors from the Water Utility participated in an Emergency Response Tabletop Exercise. The exercise was facilitated by Pre-Emergency Planning, LLC, who is under contract to the State of Wisconsin, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to conduct similar exercises throughout the State. This exercise program has been funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Critical Water Protection Grant, which was awarded to the DNR. The exercise lasted approximately three hours and was held at the Public Museum in Kenosha. Attendees included representatives from several departments and agencies outside of the Water Utility including: City Administration, Kenosha Police Department, Kenosha County Division of Emergency Management, Kenosha County Division of Health, Kenosha Unified School District, Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc., the Town of Bristol and the Town of Somers. Additionally, **Ed St. Peter** led the Water Utility team comprised of representatives from every Water Utility division.

this scope and nature. The key to a successful response would be the seamless coordination and cooperation of a multitude of organizations—each working in their own individual area of expertise. For those of us at the Water Utility, we hope that we never have to respond to an emergency situation like



Kevin Wernet of Emergency Planning, LLC leads discussions.

Participants in the exercise were required to act out a very realistic and challenging scenario designed to test their thought processes and their understanding of their own emergency response procedures. The scenario chosen by the facilitator created a situation wherein a major portion of the water distribution was contaminated by an unknown contaminant. The primary purposes of the exercise were to allow the Water Utility and other emergency response organizations an opportunity to validate and refine their current emergency response plans and to develop a greater understanding of the capabilities between departments and agencies. The exercise was purposefully not conducted in "real time," in order to allow each participant an opportunity to discuss his/her part in the emergency operations plan.

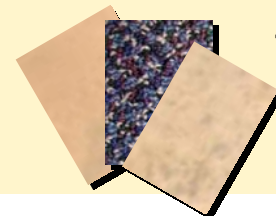
the one described in the scenario. Nevertheless, it was reassuring for all in attendance to learn that the Division of Emergency Management for Kenosha County already has procedures in place to notify and engage the necessary resources should a situation like this become a reality.

Overall, the exercise was a big success and we are confident that our time invested now practicing for the real thing will pay huge dividends should a situation like this ever occur in the future.

As the scenario played itself out, it became very apparent to all those in attendance that even the most competent of organizations could easily become overwhelmed in an emergency situation of

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Engineering Division Preps for Another Busy Season

Like all of the Water Utility divisions, there is never a time of the year that is not busy; however there are certain times during the year that are busier than others. For the Engineering Division this time occurs during the early spring to late summer months and coincides with the start of warmer weather. When Mother Nature finally gives us a reprieve and the frozen tundra gives way to mud and finally to dry ground, developers become anxious to get going on their planned developments in hopes of getting all of the utility infrastructure in-place and roadways constructed before the asphalt plants close for the winter. Doing this allows them to continue to build homes throughout the winter months.

In order to get started, developers must first get their plans reviewed and approved by several City Departments. This requires the Engineering Division to review plans and specifications for water and sewer infrastructure for several proposed developments to ensure that they comply with Water Utility standards. It usually takes several iterations until the plans and specifications are satisfactory. Next comes the flood of pre-construction conferences as each developer is anxious to get started and the Water Utility wants to make sure they get started on the right foot. Once ground-breaking finally occurs, The inspectors practically live outdoors as they travel from one development to another each day to monitor the contractor to ensure that the water and sewer are being installed properly.

In addition to developer projects, the Utility has its own list of projects that must be completed during the warm spring and summer months. This year is no different than previous years. In order to get the very best prices from contractors, contracts must be advertised and awarded early in the construction season before contractors become too busy with other work. For this reason, the first phase of the yearly water main relay project is advertised and bids opened in the April timeframe. Depending on the prices received from contractors and the availability of funds from the Water Utility, phase II will be advertised in the May timeframe. These projects not only keep Water Engineers, and Engineering Technicians, busy during the design phase, but once construction of these projects begins, they spend a majority of their time out in the field.

Presently, the Water Utility is advertising two contracts: 12-inch Water Main Relay—Phase I and 24" Water Main Extension 60th Street (County K) at I-94. The latter project will extend water service beneath the Interstate to serve the City growth area

west of the Interstate. The final touches are being put on Phase II of the Water Main Relay project, so it can be sent out to contractors in May of this year. Additionally, Engineering Division is working on the following projects for accomplishment this year:

- Replace Blower and Gas Engine at the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Upgrade 30th Avenue Pump Station
- Upgrade Security System at the Water Production Plant Including the Installation of Security Cameras at the Pumping Stations and Elevated Storage Tanks
- Repair the Seawall at the 50th Street Harbor Crossing
- Modify Meter Shop Test Bench
- Paint Final Clarifiers at the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Replace Blower Building Roof at the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Replace Roof for Digester No. 5 at the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Replace/Upgrade Control Panel for the Filter Press
- Construct a Waste Hauler Monitoring Station at the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Replace Interceptor Sewer Running through the Municipal Golf Course

All in all, it will be another extremely busy summer for the Engineering Division.

By now we all have distant memories of the faded blue walls that were the hallmark of the Engineering,

Engineering Office Spaces Receive Facelift

GIS and Distribution office spaces for many years. While the color blue continues to be the favorite of the Water Utility for obvious reasons, it was nice to finally see these walls covered with a more soothing earth tone color. Other significant improvements included widening of the hallway leading to the office spaces, a new reception area and desk, and a new doorway and door for the office of the Director of Water Distribution and Sewer Collection.

The goal of the project was not only to modernize and renovate the office spaces, but to make them more functional and efficient for employees. In addition to new paint throughout, finishes included new carpet (the color blue of course) and new ceramic floor tile in the reception area and main walkways. A new ceramic tile walkway now connects the Engineering, GIS and Distribution spaces with

the Business Services side of the building. The color of the ceramic tile was picked to match the tile already installed in Business Services side of the building. Now when directing visitors from the main reception area to the Engineering, GIS and Distribution office spaces, one can simply tell them to follow the ceramic tile road until you reach the Engineering Division reception area. Ceramic tile was also applied to the front of the reception area desk so that it would match the service counters in the main reception area. Although not identical to these service counters, the new reception desk captures the same look and feel and helps to tie the whole building together.

Since Engineers and Engineering Technicians are completely incapable of selecting colors and finishes, The Administrative Secretary came to the rescue. She worked diligently to select the paint colors, carpet, ceramic tile colors and countertop color for the reception desk. In order to improve the functionality of the office spaces and find a home for the gigantic computer monitor, Our engineering technicians put their heads together and devised a new work center/paper storage area and work surface for the computer monitor. Additionally, they completely redesigned the office layout to make it a lot more functional. Let us not forget that without our intern's willingness to spend his last few days at the Utility painting walls, tile, carpet and whatever else he could manage to get paint onto, we would not be at the point we are today with the project.

When the project first began, it seemed that everyone had their own concept for the office renovation and none of them were the same, but in the end everyone came together to accomplish this project. Renovation projects are never easy, but thanks to the help of all those involved, this particular project went as smooth as could possibly be expected. So far, we have received numerous compliments from visitors to the office spaces.



Engineering Reception Area During Renovations



Engineering Reception Area Following Renovations



Engineering/GIS Office Spaces with New Paper Storage and Work Center and Television Corner Cabinet Installed